

Hill Vote On Bress Stalled

Senator Asks Investigation Of Fortas Role

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By Elsie Carper
Washington Post Staff Writer

The nomination of David G. Bress to be a U.S. District Court judge here blew up in the Senate yesterday as a little Fortas case.

Sen. Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.) said he will object to a vote on the nomination when it comes up in the Judiciary Committee today and will filibuster against it if necessary.

He said he will fight the Bress nomination just as hard as he did the nomination of Supreme Court Justice Abe Fortas to be Chief Justice. Thurmond was one of the leaders in the Senate battle that caused Fortas to ask that his name be withdrawn when the Senate refused to halt a filibuster.

Bress, now U.S. attorney here, was nominated to be a District Court Judge by President Johnson on Aug. 2. Hearings were held on Sept. 12.

Question Greenhalgh

Sen. John J. Williams (R-Del.) called on the Judiciary Committee yesterday to reopen the hearings to look into charges that Bress received his appointment in 1965 as U.S. attorney through the intervention of Fortas.

He said that the Committee should ask William W. Greenhalgh, a former Assistant U.S. Attorney, to testify on an incident that Greenhalgh, now Montgomery County Council president, described in a speech last Friday.

Greenhalgh said that Fortas

blocked him from being nominated U.S. attorney by persuading President Johnson that he was too close to the late Sen. Robert F. Kennedy and that "because the Bobby Baker case was pending in the U.S. District Court, I couldn't be trusted."

According to Greenhalgh, Fortas, who had just been confirmed as a Supreme Court Justice, recommended that his "great and good friend" David Bress be named instead, even though Bress, like Fortas, was once Baker's lawyer.

A spokesman for Fortas denied last Saturday that the Supreme Court Justice had intervened and said that Greenhalgh's name was "completely unknown to the Justice."

W. John Kenney, a Washington lawyer and former chairman of the District Democratic Central Committee, entered the dispute yesterday, saying that he had recommended Bress for the position of U.S. attorney and that as far as he knew Fortas had nothing to do with it.

In asking for the new hearing, Williams said that the implication behind Greenhalgh's allegations "are that the executive branch after conferring with a member of the Supreme Court, acted on appointment in the judicial system with the thought of how it would influence the outcome of a potential court case against Mr. Robert Baker."